

# HEREFORD America

The Largest Privately Owned Hereford Newspaper in North America

*Serving Commercial Cattlemen & Registered Hereford Breeders*

Vol. 30, No. 2

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October 2026

## Editorial Comments...

Jill Bayers Hotchkiss



Jill Hotchkiss

The Hereford breed is enjoying a resurgence of popularity in many areas of the country particularly with commercial breeders. In this area there are still straight bred commercial Hereford herds but the most popular cross is still Hereford bred to Angus. It's just hard to beat that F1 baldy in terms of added pounds, fertility and longevity just to name a few. Then there are F1 red baldies in other areas. The tiger stripe cross of Hereford x Brahman in the southern states is incredibly popular as well.

Hybrid vigor (heterosis) is the result of these first time (F1) crosses and it results in increased weaning weights and size, better fertility and increased longevity, thus the popularity of the cross.

Fortunately there is a lot more information about heterosis out in the mainstream than a few years ago and as commercial ranchers see the results, there is an increase in popularity. They still need Hereford genetics in the mix which is good news for our breed.

Here is a quick list of advantages (approximate) of F1 baldies (compared to straight Angus) from a study used by the AHA called Impacts of Crossbreeding on Profitability in Vertically Coordinated Beef Industry Marketing Systems. See related article on page 16.

- 14% increase in weaning weight
- 7% higher breed-back rate
- \$51 more per cow, per year
- Better milking ability
- \$20 advantage in feed efficiency
- Improved docility
- \$30 advantage in feedlot profitability

(continued on page 16)

## Klippenstein Receives Beef Checkoff Visionary Award

Glen Klippenstein of Maysville, MO, was named the 2026 recipient of the Cattlemen's Beef Board Beef Checkoff Visionary Award, recognizing his leadership, service and commitment to advancing the beef industry.

Through Glenkirk Farms, Klippenstein made a tremendous impact on the Hereford breed, marketing thousands of bulls and females and exporting genetics to 22 countries. His influence extended well beyond his own operation, with decades dedicated to strengthening the cattle industry and supporting the mission of the Beef Checkoff.

This award recognizes an individual in the beef industry who has demonstrated exemplary support of and commitment to the Checkoff's goals and



Glen Klippenstein has had an incredible life in the cattle industry.

vision.

"Glen is one of the true Beef Checkoff pioneers," said Cheryl DeVuyst, 2026 chair of the Cattlemen's Beef Board. "He's a lifelong cattleman, and he stepped up when he saw beef demand declining in the 1970s and 1980s. Glen's ideas and achievements

changed our industry for the better in so many ways, and he truly deserves this year's Beef Checkoff Visionary Award."

Born on a diversified crop and livestock farm in Saskatchewan, Canada, Klippenstein and his family moved to Pennsylvania in 1948. After graduating as the valedictorian of his high school class, Klippenstein studied at Penn State University under the mentorship of famous cattleman and professor Herman Purdy, a

farm adviser to then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower. After graduating from Penn State, Klippenstein farmed in Pennsylvania for several years and started to build a herd of high-quality Hereford cattle. During this time, Klippenstein met his future wife, Linda.

(continued on page 4)

## Colyer Hereford and Angus Named BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year, Jensen Ranch Runner Up



Pictured L-R include: Angie Denton of Drovers, Guy Colyer, Katie Colyer, Cruz Colyer and BIF Board President Gordon Hodges.

The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) recognized Colyer Herefords and Angus, Bruneau, ID, as the 2026 BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year during the group's annual research symposium in Boise, ID this summer. This national award recognizes a producer's dedication to improving the beef industry at the seedstock level.

Rooted in Bruneau, ID, since 1876, Colyer Herefords and Angus represents a masterclass in balancing multi-generational heritage with cutting-edge genetic progress. Today the fifth, (cont. on page 6)



# Sale Calendar

Events and Advertisers' Sale Dates



| September |                                                                                |                                                                                                     |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18        | Foundations for the Future Frozen Genetics Sale Morrison, TN                   | 8 Jamison Ranch Quarter Horse Sale Quinter, KS                                                      |
| 19        | Foundations for the Future Live Cattle Sale Morrison, TN                       | 10 Fawcett's Elm Creek Ranch Fall Female Sale Superior SmartAuctions and Ree Heights, SD            |
| 19        | Ehlke Montana Made Sale and Ranch Open House Townsend, MT and smartauctions.co | 12 Indian Mound Ranch Bull Sale Canadian, TX                                                        |
| 19        | Nebraska Hereford Tour                                                         | 22 Jensen's "The Chosen" Sale Louisburg, KS                                                         |
| 25        | Holden Herefords Line One Ladies Female Event Valier, MT                       | 23-24 American Hereford Association Educational Forum and Annual Membership Meeting Kansas City, MO |
| 26        | Delaney/Atkins Female Sale Tea, SD                                             | 25 American Royal Show (new venue) Kansas City, KS                                                  |
|           |                                                                                | 26 Hoffman Ranch Female Sale Thedford, NE                                                           |
|           |                                                                                | 31 Mohican Farms & Guests Sale Glenmont, OH                                                         |

| October |                                                       |  |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| 3       | Colyer Herefords & Angus Fall Female Sale Bruneau, ID |  |

| November |                                                      | December |                                                             |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2        | P&R Ranch Production Sale Leedey, OK                 | 2-5      | Western State National Hereford Show & Sale (4th) Reno, NV  |
| 12       | Hoffman Fall Bull Sale Thedford, NE                  | 4        | Knoll Crest Farms Total Performance Bull Sale Red House, VA |
| 13       | SD Hereford Association Annual Meeting Brookings, SD | 5        | Kansas Hereford Assn. Annual Meeting St. George, KS         |
| 14       | SD Excellence Sale Brookings, SD                     | 5        | Frederickson Ranch Bull Sale Spearfish, SD                  |
| 17       | B&D Fall Classic Odin, KS                            | 11       | Minnesota Hereford Breeders Banquet Hutchinson, MN          |
| 18       | NAILE Hereford Show Louisville, KY                   | 12       | Minnesota's GoPher the Purple Sale Hutchinson, MN           |
| 19       | Largent & Sons Kaycee, WY                            | 18       | Three Hills Ranch Bull and Female Sale Baldwin, IA          |
| 19       | Fenton Herefords Bull Sale Irma, Alberta             |          |                                                             |
| 23       | The Berrys Production Sale Cheyenne, WY              |          |                                                             |
| 28       | Hutton Ranch Sale Bassett, NE                        |          |                                                             |

2026-2027 UPCOMING AD DEADLINES

| Issue     | Deadline         |
|-----------|------------------|
| Nov/Dec   | October 5, 2026  |
| January   | December 5, 2026 |
| February  | January 5, 2027  |
| March     | February 5, 2027 |
| April/May | March 5, 2027    |

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# Klippenstein...

(continued from page 1)

In 1966, Klippenstein forged a partnership with his friend Kirk Pendleton. The new venture prompted the Klippensteins to move their family and farm from Pennsylvania to Maysville, MO, where Klippenstein and Pendleton launched Glenkirk Farms. Over the next 28 years, Klippenstein's work in Hereford breeding made a tremendous impact. He sold approximately 7,000 bulls, 7,000 females and tens of thousands of units of semen to 22 countries. During that time, Klippenstein also imported some of the first fullblood Simmental cattle into the United States.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s,



Glen and Linda Klippenstein with their Visionary Award.

Klippenstein saw beef demand declining and strongly believed the industry needed to take action. He and other producers began to push for a \$1-per-head national Beef Checkoff. Klippenstein served as one of the original members of the Beef Board, which held its first meeting in the fall of 1986.

"We were losing producers like crazy," Klippenstein recalled back in 1990-1991. "So, we took the bull by the horns. And we got Congress to help us, which they finally did through legislation. And a whole checkoff program was begun."

As chair of the Cattlemen's Beef Board in 1990-1991, Klippenstein

helped establish the rigorous financial and auditing practices that continue to ensure Beef Checkoff funds are used appropriately. Those practices are still in use today, including rules that Checkoff contractors cannot make a profit from their work or use any funding for political purposes. Klippenstein's innovative spirit also contributed to the development of Checkoff programs aimed at consistently providing consumers with high-quality beef.

In addition to his years spent on the Cattlemen's Beef Board, including as the 1990-1991 chair, Klippenstein's years of service in the cattle industry include a term as chair of the American Polled Hereford Association, six years as director of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and nine years as CEO of the American Chianina Association. His influence stretched beyond the cattle industry when he served as a Missouri State Senator from 1993 through 1994. He returned to the legislature as a Missouri State Representative from 2010 through 2012. During his years in office, Klippenstein consistently educated fellow lawmakers and constituents about the value of agriculture.

Today, Klippenstein and his wife Linda have four children and nine grandchildren. He and his son Brian continue to actively manage a small Hereford herd near Maysville, MO.

"Glen is a prime example of a true cattleman who saw an opportunity to step up for his industry," said Greg

Hanes, CEO of the Cattlemen's Beef Board. "He's been absolutely tireless over the years, between raising great cattle and sharing his love and respect for agriculture. All of us at the Cattlemen's Beef Board congratulate Glen on yet another achievement as he receives the 2026 Beef Checkoff Visionary Award."

The Beef Checkoff program was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. The checkoff assesses \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. States may retain up to 50 cents on the dollar and forward the other 50 cents per head to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, which administers the national checkoff program, subject to USDA approval.



Glenkirk Farms, Maysville, MO, home of the 1969 National Champion Hereford Bull.



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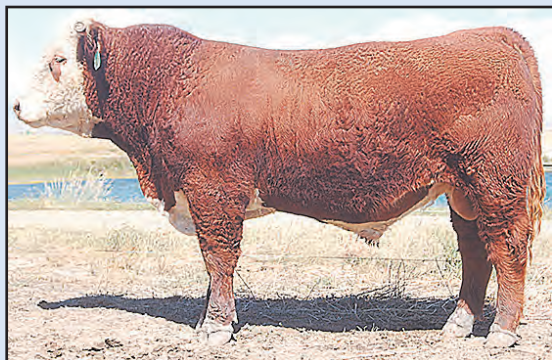


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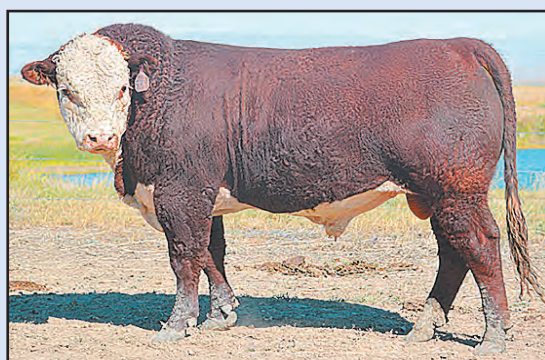
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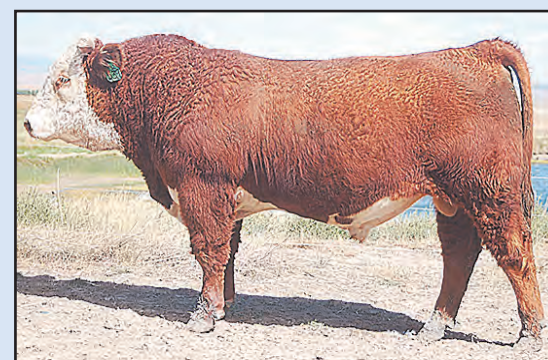
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## Colyer ...

(continued from page 1)

sixth and seventh generations of the Colyer family manage the ranch, which has evolved from a traditional commercial cow-calf operation into one of the nation's premier seedstock programs.

The Colyer philosophy is built on a "commercial-first" mindset. After a strategic shift in 1992 to focus entirely on seedstock, the family dedicated itself to producing Hereford and Angus genetics that thrive in the rugged western environment. A hallmark of the family's program is the production of "black baldy" females, leveraging heterosis to improve fertility and longevity for their customers.

What truly sets the Colyers apart is their early and unwavering adoption of technology. From purchasing their first computer in 1984 to achieving the prestigious Platinum TPR status, a distinction held by only 23 Hereford breeders in the U.S., the ranch prioritizes data integrity. By utilizing artificial insemination, embryo transfer (ET), in vitro fertilization and genomic testing, they provide commercial cattlemen with a level of predictability that is rare in the industry.

Their commitment to the "conception to consumption" chain is further evidenced by their direct involvement in marketing their customers' feeder cattle, ensuring that Colyer genetics

deliver value at every level of the beef industry.

The current cow herd consists of approximately 200 registered Hereford and 200 registered Angus females, along with roughly 300 recipient cows used in their ET program. The ranch markets cattle through multiple annual events, including an annual bull sale hosted in February, Frozen Genetics Sale on March 3, 2026, and the 25th Annual Female Sale scheduled for October 3, 2026.

"For nearly 150 years, the Colyer family has made a lasting impact on commercial cow herds across the United States by supplying Hereford and Angus genetics rooted in disciplined selection, comprehensive data collection and a focused breeding program," says Shane Bedwell, American Hereford Association chief operating officer. "Their longevity, combined with a forward-thinking approach to genetic improvement, is something that should be admired across the beef industry."

Beyond the ranch gates, the Colyer family remains deeply embedded in their community and industry.

With family members serving as EMTs, school board trustees and industry leaders, their impact extends far beyond the cattle they sell.

The American Hereford Association nominated Colyer Herefords and Angus for this award, which is sponsored by *Drovers*.



Strong foundations. Proven genetics. Females built for the future.

Photo by Katie Colyer

Approximately 400 beef producers, academia and industry representatives attended the organization's 58th Annual Research Symposium and Con-

vention in Boise, Idaho. BIF's mission is to help improve the industry by promoting greater acceptance of beef cattle performance evaluation.

## Jensen Ranch Runner Up BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year



Jensen Ranch, Courtland KS named runner-up BIF Seedstock Producer of the Year 2026, presented at BIF in Boise, ID. Jensen's were nominated by Kansas Livestock Association. Pictured Kevin and Sheila Jensen with Angie Denton and BIF Board President Gordon Hodges.

## Jensen Ranch: Producing long-lasting genetics

By Rachel Waggle, KLA

Kevin and Sheila Jensen are no strangers to the seedstock business. This year marks five decades since Kevin sold his first bull in 1976. In those 50 years, the Jensens have worked tirelessly to build their program from the ground up. In so doing, their operation has grown into a nationally respected and decorated Hereford program, known for producing cattle that perform well on the ranch and in the show ring.

Today, Jensen Ranch runs around 300 purebred Hereford cows in Republic County, Kansas. The focus has been on breeding high-quality seedstock to build a lasting legacy for generations to come. This has proven successful, as the Jensens raised three children on the ranch and now are enjoying the third generation. Their

oldest son, Brady, and his wife, Allie, have three kids; daughter Brooke and her husband, Kalen, have two kids; and the youngest, Ben, recently married Michelle. Brady's family returned to the ranch full-time in 2024.

The Jensens host three sales every year, offering everything from bulls to females to embryos and semen. With so many animals and genetic packages sold throughout the year, a keen eye for detail is necessary. The family maintains a balancing act in the operation, aiming to produce cattle that are as good as possible phenotypically while also possessing cutting-edge genetic profiles. They use in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer extensively, transplanting around 200 fresh embryos each year. Genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (EPD)

(continued on page 8)

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SALE GELDING



SALE FOALS

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Jensen Ranch near Courtland, KS.

(continued from page 6)

and ultrasound data are collected on every animal for further insight into its potential. Calving ease (CE) and birth weight (BW) are significant traits at Jensen Ranch, but Kevin emphasized that ultralight birthweights are not the goal. Instead, they target a balance of reduced BW and increased CE with performance traits that allow calves to excel after a healthy birth.

Carcass traits also are taken into consideration to maintain a well-rounded herd. The American Hereford Association (AHA) has a National Reference Sire Program (NRSP), through which the Jensens have nominated multiple bulls. In the program, semen is collected from selected bulls and placed in an NRSP herd, then data is gathered on the resulting offspring from birth through harvest. According to AHA, benefits of NRSP to participating bull owners include obtaining high-accuracy carcass EPDs and receiving performance data compared to other sires tested in herd contemporaries.

Producing high-quality bulls that work for a variety of customer objectives is paramount at Jensen Ranch, whether those goals include raising replacement heifers or crossbred baldy calves. Either way, the Jensens sell fertility, first and foremost.

"Fertility is the number one thing in beef production. If you don't have it, then you don't have calves," Kevin said.

They believe longevity goes hand in hand with fertility. Most of their animals today can be traced back to a load of females Kevin bought in the 1990s—cows that were all advanced in age, proven to be "long-lasting, hard-working cows," according to Brady. Those cows became a reliable foundation for their current herd. He believes the correlation between those cows and today's sustained cow fertility index provides an advantage to their offspring from a longevity perspective.

"Fertility is not just the first pregnancy; it's how long they can last as a breeding female in the operation," Brady explained.

As the Jensens have worked to optimize their desired traits, both their herd and customer base have grown. As a result, the family made the decision to add Angus bulls to their sale offerings. They believe the heterosis achieved through a Hereford-Angus

mating is invaluable and sought to offer their customers options. With the hope of sustaining future generations of the family, Jensen Ranch plans to continue expanding their bull market through promotion of the "baldy" and the usefulness of Hereford influence on commercial cowherds.

## Final Farewell

### Ruth Wood

The funeral service for Ruth Ethel (Ablin) Wood of Aberdeen, S.D. will be at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2026, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, under the direction of Spitzer-Miller Funeral Home, with Pastor Matt Spoden officiating. Ruth passed away peacefully at Bethesda Place on Thursday, August 27, 2026, a couple hours before her 85th birthday.

Ruth Ethel (Ablin) Wood was born in Aberdeen, on August 28, 1941, to Louis and Gena (Kilen) Ablin. She joined three older brothers Henry, Ted and Ralph.



Ruth attended Garfield School in Aberdeen for a few years before the family moved back to the family farm near Scatterwood Lake, Mansfield, S.D. She finished school at Cresbard High School graduating as the class valedictorian in 1959.

She attended Augustana College, earning bachelor's degrees in German and English education with a minor in elementary education.

Ruth married Delano Wood at Bethlehem Lutheran Church on June 9, 1963. Three children were born to this union — Wendy in 1966, Cindy in 1967, and Steven in 1970.

They built their lifetime home on the farm that Del was already establishing as Woodcrest Farms a few miles east of Cresbard. The couple farmed and raised registered Polled Hereford cattle, spending a lot of time showing

(continued on page 10)

# The Berry's Production Sale!

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(continued from page 8)

and marketing their cattle as a family, including trips to many junior shows across the Midwest.

In short stints, Ruth taught at Cresbard High School, Faulkton High School and Blumengard Hutterite Colony, but the farm always called her home. Needing a flexible schedule to be available for helping with the farm work and to make it to her kids' activities, she spent a decade working for Research Triangle Institute and was an Aberdeen American News columnist for several years.

Ruth was the first woman to be elected to the Cresbard School Board and volunteered at many community and church events, including one of her favorites — the annual Lenten Luncheons.

She and Del enjoyed traveling to new places, exploring their ancestral roots and visiting locals in North America and around the world including Japan, Australia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Germany, England, France, Mexico Argentina, Chile and the Netherlands.

As they slowed down and aged, they turned the farm over to son Steve and grandson Seth. Del passed away in 2019.

Ruth moved to Parkside Retirement Community in 2021 and thoroughly enjoyed making new friends and living closer to her church home.

This past March, she spent a short

time at Bethesda before moving to Town Square Assisted Living. She moved back to Bethesda in July.

Ruth's wishes were to be cremated and have her ashes spread on the pasture where the Pasque flowers bloom each spring and where her husband's ashes have already been spread.

Survivors include three children, Wendy (Vaughn) Thorstenson, Cindy (Darwin) Aman, and Steven (Rene) Wood. Eleven grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren, Gina (Levi) Goetz, Ryker, Dallas, Nolan; Kendra (Greg) Fred, Emmett, August, Annie; Jana Thorstenson; Kara (Jake) Flakus, Henry, Hollyn, Lonni; Andrew (Lynae) Aman, Myla; Sam Aman, Hattie; Alex (Maria) Aman, Elsie; Zachary (Grace) Jessee, Walter; Hunter (Carly) Wood, Ruby, Hazel, Jett, Heston, Stella; Nicholas (Macy) Wood, Mason; Seth (Lauren) Wood, Ivy. One sister-in-law, Lois Ablin.

She was preceded by her parents, her husband of 55 years, three brothers, Henry Ablin, Ted (Joanne) Ablin, Ralph (Judy) Ablin, and one brother-in-law, Vernon Wood.

## Clarence L. Bennett

Clarence L. Bennett, 94, of Benton, WI passed away on Monday, August 31, 2026. Clarence was born on March

20, 1932 to Richard "Dick" & Harriet "Hattie" (Birkett) Bennett in Coon Branch, Lafayette County, WI. He was the

youngest of a family of 9, raised on the family farm. He attended school at Buncombe School and graduated from Sullivan School.

He married Mary Joanne Curwen on September 2, 1953, and together they established SandRock Ranch.

Clarence loved farming. That was Clarence's entire life. From tending to the fields, watching his mother's Herefords give birth to their calves, just being on the farm every day gave him



such pride. Again, Clarence loved being a farmer, but he also cherished his family. He and Joanne would travel out west to look at cattle and he was a regular subscriber of *The Hereford Journal*, that always went well while enjoying a home-cooked meal made by Joanne. He loved his International tractors and had a special love for his beloved dogs he had through the years.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him. Clarence is survived by a son, Kevin (Janice) Bennett of Benton, WI; a daughter, Kim (Terry) Kieler of Cuba City, WI; 6 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; along by many nieces, nephews and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Joanne (August 12, 2011), 8 siblings: James (May) Bennett, Gertrude (George) Sheffer, Norman "Buck" (Opal) Bennett, Mabel (Edward) Stark, Mildred (Delmar & Louie) Heim-Loomis, Daisy (Wilfred) Kieler, Betty (Donald) Riley & Melvin (Carol) Bennett; and in laws: Bill (Theda) Curwen & Glada (Keith) Wurm.

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# Muscle Ahead: Changes in assessing total red meat yield will transform the industry

by Wes Ishmael, AHA

Sometimes you chase the wrong rabbit.

Beef cattle seedstock and commercial producers included ribeye area in their selection decisions over decades because it is the only muscle measurement included in USDA's yield grade equation. Yield grade, of course, is supposed to describe differences in the percentage of closely trimmed, boneless retail cuts.

Turns out, ribeye area explains less than 5% of the variation in actual subprimal yield, according to Dale Woerner, Cargill endowed professor in sustainable meat science at Texas Tech University.

"There is not enough muscle in the carcass for what the ribeye tells us. Therein really lies the problem," Woerner says. "Ribeye area is a very poor indicator of muscle in carcasses, particularly in dairy-beef type cattle, which represent about 23.5% of the total feedlot mix."

## Broke and busted

Sometimes you chase the wrong rabbit for a long time.

Woerner explains the yield grade equation itself only explains about a third of the variation in subprimal yield for native cattle.

Charlie Murphy developed the original yield grade equation in 1958, according to Woerner. Murphy published his work in 1960; USDA adopted it in 1962. The formula is based on 1958-model cattle, and literally a handful of them at that.

Ty Lawrence, Caviness Davis Distinguished Chair in Meat Science at West Texas A&M University, provided historical perspective at the 2016 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Research Symposium.

"The era in which the yield grade

was developed was dominated by small-framed, early maturing cattle, which were primarily purebred Herefords. In contrast, the current fed beef population is a kaleidoscope of genetic diversity that is medium and large in frame; the greatest population of purebred animals is now represented by the Holstein breed," according to the BIF proceedings. "Moreover, cattle feeding technology including growth promoting implants and beta-adrenergic agonists offer cattle feeders the opportunity to maximize growth and manipulate composition of gain."

"Yield grade is broken because the individual factors don't tell us what we want it to," Woerner explains. "We utilize ribeye area as the single indicator of muscling, in proportion to weight, in the yield grade equation. So, when your indicator of lean red meat yield doesn't work, then how can you expect an equation that was created to predict red meat yield to work?"

The problem, long understood, has deepened over time through genetic selection and management.

From a genetic standpoint, Woerner wonders, "Did we create this by only selecting for ribeye area, allowing for round muscling and shoulder muscling and total animal muscling to drift apart? I think, yes. With single-trait selection, irrespective of true muscling, not only did we allow for this to happen, but we probably made it happen, and we made it happen pretty quick."

In terms of management, Woerner points out economic signals continue to encourage feeding cattle to heavier weights. Annual average fed cattle finished weights and carcass weights accelerated in recent years as cattle feeders added significantly more days to the finishing period. Historically low cattle numbers explain part of the shift — slowing turnover while trying



to maintain pen occupancy rates — as does relatively marginal penalties for excessive weight.

As cattle age and weight increase, Woerner explains fat increases more than muscle, leading to a disproportionate increase in fat as part of carcass composition. While carcass quality has increased over time, due in part to feeding cattle longer, so have the number of Yield Grade 4 and 5 (less valuable) carcasses.

Woerner points out muscle is more efficient to produce than fat. Increased muscularity improves feed efficiency. In an era of societal concern about squandering resources, he says needlessly putting more fat on finished cattle is also a sustainability problem.

## New measures

"The system used today is based on

the premise of premiums awarded to carcasses with higher lean proportions, while discounts are applied to those with excess fat or bone. However, as modern cattle differ significantly from those of the past, the ability of the yield grade system to accurately predict red meat yield has declined," says Jessica Lancaster, National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) senior director of product quality research. "This misalignment signals the need for a science-based approach that better reflects modern cattle."

This need led researchers like Woerner and Lawrence to focus on how to improve assessing red meat yield. The same quest is why the NCBA, on behalf of the beef checkoff, established the Red Meat Yield (RMV) working

(continued on page 14)

OUTTAGRASS CATTLE COMPANY by Jan Swan Wood c 2026



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|-----|-----|----|-----|------|----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 3   | 1.6 | 97 | 180 | 26   | 96 | 0.77 | 0.87 | 92  | 217 | 373 |

**BIRDWELL *New Standard* 2912 ET**

| CED | BW  | WW | YW | MILK | CW | MARB | RE   | \$BMI | \$CHB |
|-----|-----|----|----|------|----|------|------|-------|-------|
| 9.5 | 1.0 | 66 | 87 | 34   | 85 | 1.07 | 1.77 | 573   | 235   |

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| CED | BW   | WW | YW  | MILK | CW | MARB | RE   | \$M | \$B | \$C |
|-----|------|----|-----|------|----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 9   | -0.1 | 84 | 154 | 27   | 77 | 0.66 | 0.83 | 105 | 182 | 341 |

**SR *Rio Bravo* 8029 ET**

| CED  | BW   | WW | YW | MILK | CW | MARB | RE   | \$BMI | \$CHB |
|------|------|----|----|------|----|------|------|-------|-------|
| 11.1 | -0.9 | 53 | 77 | 27   | 61 | 0.55 | 0.27 | 466   | 149   |

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(continued from page 12)

group several years ago, guiding necessary checkoff-funded research.

“The goal of the working group is to look at the scientific foundation of how we quantify red meat yield and to determine if there was a need to contribute to the science,” Lancaster explains. “We’re currently looking at if carcass computed tomography (CT) can be used as a biological reference standard for determining compositional attributes of fed beef carcasses and validating future measurement and predictive technologies.”

Currently the RMY working group and researchers are about 75% finished with CT-scanning about 600 head of fed cattle that are representative of the harvest mix, conducting a traditional cutout and yield test of each carcass and comparing the results. It is the largest commercially available study ever conducted.

“We’re hoping to have all of the scientific data needed in the next couple of years to hand off to industry partners,” Lancaster says.

The study represents a herculean step toward likely reality.

“With CT, we can actually measure carcass composition. So, this is no longer a prediction tool; it’s an actual measurement,” Woerner explains. “From this data, we can tell you how much muscle, fat and bone are in the carcass and how much marbling is in the muscles. We would use this on every carcass, but it doesn’t operate fast enough.”

Without sauntering into the scientific weeds, and painting with the broadest of brushes, the notion is to collect CT scans on a representative sample of cattle populations that can be used to train predictive technologies which can assess carcasses at packing house chain speeds. In other words, accurately assess red meat yield of every carcass flowing through a packing plant.

“If we can measure red meat yield accurately, we know there is a really strong relationship between true red

meat yield and true value,” Woerner says. In fact, he explains the relationship is 89%, when comparing value to actual red meat yield.

Emerging technologies such as three-dimensional (3D) imaging and radar are demonstrating such accuracy. For instance, 3D digital imagery has been used to explain more than 90% of the variation in saleable red meat yield.

Unsurprisingly, Woerner notes major packers have been collecting data from CT and other technologies in their investigation of the potential. Moreover, he says some breed associations are working aggressively to understand these new technologies, how total red meat yield might be measured and valued in the future, and how to identify genetic differences and possible selection tools.

The American Hereford Association (AHA), for instance, invested in CT scans for a portion of the latest steers harvested from its National Reference Sire Program. Shane Bedwell, AHA chief operations officer and director of breed improvement, explains the live animals were scanned with radar technology and assigned phenotypic scores before harvest. This data will also contribute to the RMY working group project.

“Our participation ensures Hereford genetics are included in the population of cattle that will be used to train the predictive technologies,” Bedwell explains. “It also puts us at the forefront of developing genetic selection tools for Hereford breeders and their commercial customers.”

#### Sooner than you think

“I believe we’ll see these technologies in use for transactional purposes within the next 3-5 years,” Woerner says. “As soon as packers have the opportunity to implement it, they will move forward sooner rather than later.”

When that day comes, logic suggests packers will apply new premiums and discounts based on red meat yield —

in place of the current ones based on yield grades — no different than how they reward and penalize carcass quality, which has long been accurately measurable with camera grading technology.

Speaking of which, expect the industry’s intent focus on carcass quality to continue when it can also more accurately assess and value differences in red meat yield. Cattle producers fought too long and hard regaining consumer demand with improved eating satisfaction by ensuring the majority of carcasses grade Choice and higher.

“Marbling will and should remain important,” Woerner says. “We cannot, as an industry, afford to lose eating quality. It is our advantage compared to competing proteins. It is also the original form of stored energy for the maternal side of the equation.”

So, premium Choice and Prime will likely remain the quality targets, while the highest-value carcasses will also be leaner and heavier muscled.

#### Gearing up for the revolution

Given the bovine biologic cycle and slow generational interval, if red meat yield premiums and carcasses become reality in the next 3-5 years, as Woerner believes, then the clock is beginning to tick with more urgency.

“Cattle being harvested today were bred 27 months ago,” he says. “We’re already making breeding decisions that may be valued in a new system.”

Although the day might come when producers have predictive technologies to assess red meat yield differences chute-side, an astute eye goes a long way. No one can peer beneath the hide with the naked eye, but many can see differences in muscle shape, thickness and volume.

“Pay attention to muscle, round shape, the hind quarter and forequarters while maintaining ribeye area and marbling score,” Woerner says. “It’s really not much more complicated than that.”

As Bedwell says, the challenge, as always, comes with selecting for improved red meat yield while also maintaining balanced selection for other economically relative traits.

“Maintain quality grade without excessive backfat, pay attention to muscle, watch for antagonisms and keep focus on balanced multi-trait selection,” Bedwell says.

In the meantime, Lancaster notes the RMY working group and NCBA continue to provide significant producer education so producers can be prepared for the likely industry transition.



#### Transformation

“I dare say the biggest improvement that will be made by accurately assessing red meat yield is the fact that we’ll be able to accurately assess and breed livestock using genetics and genomics that are actually higher in red meat yield, not just with larger ribeyes,” Woerner says.

Accurate red meat yield assessment is the next step in the value-based evolution. Producers asked for and received the opportunity to market fed cattle based on individual differences rather than receive an average price which subsidizes inferior performers and penalizes superior ones. Most fed cattle today are sold via alternative marketing arrangements, including marketing grids, because they have proven to return more dollars to producers while increasing the availability of higher-quality beef that consumers demand. Accurate red meat yield assessment will further differentiate value.

“The RMY working group has always had the producer’s interest in mind in terms of how they can be better rewarded for carcass composition,” Lancaster says.

Woerner believes identifying and rewarding true red meat yield will bring an industry paradigm shift.

“I would expect cattle to look and perform differently than they do today once the systems are in place and operational,” he says. “I would expect it to completely transform the look of the cattle.”

Woerner points out cattle producers have already demonstrated their ability to transform cattle in a relatively short period of time. Think of the frame race in the 1970s and the current ongoing shift in carcass quality. Progress can be even more rapid today with genomic and genetic tools, including advanced reproductive technology.

“If the premium for red meat yield is large enough, I think the greatest thing that will come out of this for Hereford is more industry emphasis on crossbreeding,” Bedwell says. “When you factor in cow-calf producers’ maternal considerations, the need for crossbreeding will be even more important because terminal sires for red meat yield will not produce the type of daughters that thrive on the range.”

#### Frenzen-Inducted-in-Nebraska-Hall-of-Agricultural Achievement



Galen Frenzen, Fullerton, NE was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement earlier this year. He is pictured here with his family. The hall inducted 12 new members representing a broad cross section of Nebraska agriculture. Each inductee was recognized for leadership, innovation and long-term contributions that have strengthened Nebraska agriculture and rural communities.





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# Make More, Take More: Maternal heterosis pays and pays

by Wes Ishmael, AHA  
KANSAS CITY, MO —  
Maternal heterosis borne by complementary crossbreeding is tough to beat for leveraging production efficiency and economic potential in commercial cow-calf herds.  
Consider a 14% advantage in first-calf weaning rate at 2 years of age (see Table 1). That's the difference between Hereford-sired, black baldy females and commercial An-

Table 1: 2-year-old Females

|                                  | Angus-sired | Hereford-sired |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Feb. body weight (lbs.)          | 1,014       | 963            |
| Feb. BCS                         | 4.8         | 4.6            |
| Feb calf body weight (lbs.)      | 243         | 252            |
| Milk                             | 8.3         | 9.7            |
| DMI                              | 31.1        | 27.8           |
| April calf weaning weight (lbs.) | 387         | 373            |
| First-calf weaning rate          | 76%         | 90%            |
| Rebreed (AI)                     | 60%         | 68%            |
| Rebreed pregnant                 | 75%         | 93%            |

Source: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

gus females in the American Hereford Association's (AHA) ongoing cooperative research project with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). It is designed to quantify the differences between breeding either Hereford or Angus bulls to commercial Angus

cows over time and retaining replacement heifers.  
"In a 100-head cow herd, that's 14 more calves. If you put a \$2,000 price tag on each weaned calf, that's \$28,000. That's \$280 more per cow. That's a lot of dollars," says Dan Shike, lead project researcher and interim head of the UIUC department of animal sciences.  
Plus, 18% more of the Hereford-sired females bred back on time for their second calf.  
The study began with 600 commercial Angus cows. Half were bred to six different Hereford bulls; the other half to Angus bulls. All bulls used represented the top 15% of each breed for its maternal and terminal indexes. This is a fall-calving herd. Results so far underscore the significant advantages enabled by Hereford genetics and maternal heterosis.

"I'm not looking for the cow that wins in one year. I'm looking for the cow that wins over her lifetime and stays in the herd, stays in production, because she has some built-in fertility, some resilience, which leads to longevity," Shike says. "They wean more calves, and more of them breed back. That's Hereford genetics; that's maternal heterosis."

### More efficiency and fewer inputs

"The baldy female, in my opinion, is second to none as a replacement female, from the milking ability we get from the Hereford and the carcass merit to sustainability," says Paul Koffskey, Groendyke Ranch manager, Nash, Okla. "If you're not using that to your advantage, I think you're leaving money on the table."

Koffskey was no stranger to Hereford genetics and heterosis when he came to Groendyke Ranch several years ago. At the time, ranch owner, John Groendyke, said his goal was increased ranch efficiency. Keep in mind the ranch runs about 2,000 commercial cows across four ranches in three counties. The cows are all Angus — 75% black and 25% red. These days, Hereford bulls breed about 80% of the cows.

"There's got to be an efficient cow. In my opinion, with the rising input costs, whether it be feed, fertilizer, labor or whatever, the cow has to be as efficient as she possibly can, whether it be weaning half or more of her body weight, having a calf every year or breeding back to have a calf at the same time every year and maintaining a BCS (body condition score) of 6 or better with no inputs other than during the winter time," Koffskey says. "That's what you're after, and I guess you could probably call that intensive management, but it should be with the input costs we have now days."

(continued on page 19)



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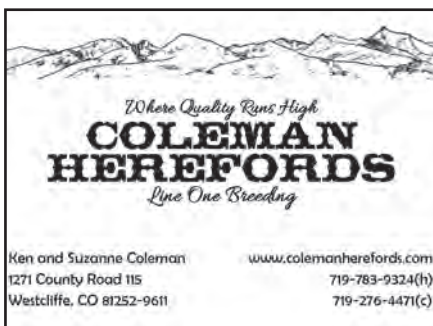
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(continued from page 16)

Thinking back to the UIUC study, Shike explains feed efficiency of the Hereford-sired baldies so far accounts for a savings of \$90 per head per year in feed costs, compared to their straight black counterparts. That's with hay priced at \$150 per ton.

All of that helps explain the enviable market for the baldy replacement females Groendyke Ranch is quickly building, at least in general terms. More specifically, the customer base is growing because Koffskey matches bulls to individual cow groups of 50-100 head based on whether they're building replacements or terminal calves. He is also a stickler for using bulls with complete genetic evaluation data.

"I can prove in black and white what those traits mean to us when I'm putting those bulls with different groups of cows. It's a hugely successful tool to use," Koffskey says.

Groendyke Ranch was named the AHA Commercial Producer of the Year last October. The audience saw a video during the award presentation, providing an overview of the ranch and its cattle.

"That group of black baldy heifers you saw just weaned their second calves at 215 days actual age. The steer calves weaned at 665 lbs. and the heifer calves at 655 lbs.," Koffskey told the crowd. "The breed-back was 97% on a 45-day breeding season. How much more effi-

**Table 2: Implications of Longevity**

Source: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

|                         | Angus-sired (%) | Hereford-sired (%) | % Difference |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 2-year-olds calved      | 89              | 95                 | 6            |
| First-calf weaning rate | 76              | 90                 | 14           |
| Pregnant 2-year-olds    | 75              | 93                 | 18           |
| 3-year-olds calved      | 69              | 83                 | 14           |
| In herd as 4-year-olds  | 67              | 80                 | 13           |

cient do you want to be? It's all because of the Hereford influence."

From the first year Groendyke Ranch incorporated Hereford bulls to the third year, Koffskey says weaning weights increased 62 lbs. He explains, "Some people may think that's not a lot, but on 2,000 calves, you do the math, and it's all because of the Hereford advantage. There's no question about that."

Most producers would rather have more pounds to sell than fewer, of course. But the cost of added pounds is also part of the equation.

Greg Thoma, AgNext director for agricultural modeling and lifecycle assessment at Colorado State University, used data from the UIUC study to conduct a lifecycle assessment for a 1,000-head operation over 10 years. The model considered a 1,000-cow commercial Angus herd using Hereford bulls and retaining its own replacement heifers or using Angus bulls and retaining its own replacement heifers.

Although weaning weights were

heavier in the Angus-sired scenario, increased fertility, breed-back and longevity meant more weaned calves over time in the Hereford-sired model, which yielded 45,728 more pounds of steers and open heifers to sell.

For instance, 13% more of the Hereford-sired females in the UIUC study remained in the herd as 4-year-olds, compared to the straight black group (Table 2 above).

"I've seen the difference in other breeds that we have tried to use, whether it's a terminal cross or not. And by far, the Hereford breed is, hands down, way above it," Koffskey says. "Whether you put a Hereford bull on the black cows, red cows, Charolais cows or whatever, I don't think you get that sort of hybrid vigor explosion with any other genetic cross."

Shane Bedwell, AHA chief operations officer and director of breed improvement, points out Hereford genetics provide additional heterosis due to the fact they are the least related of the Bos Tau-

rus breeds, as documented by the Meat Animal Research Center (MARC).

"Heterosis and hybrid vigor on the black-hided cow or the red-hided cow, in my opinion, is a genetic explosion, whether it's a steer or a heifer, whether they're going to the feedlot or they're being retained as bred female, as we do," Koffskey says.

#### Residual returns

Studied through a different lens, Hereford-sired maternal heterosis adds increasingly more to the bottom line each year.

Researchers at the University of Tennessee (UT) modeled the economic difference between breeding Hereford bulls or Angus bulls to commercial Angus cows over 10 years. They used documented genetic differences between the breeds and real-world economics to assess annual net income and net worth for smaller operations (30 cows) and larger ones (500 cows).

See full results of the UT analysis at hereford.org.

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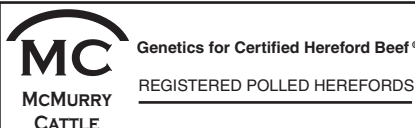
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Kyle and Kelly Carmichael, 200 1st Cross Baldy Steer Calves, 560 lbs. @ \$4.88 = \$2,732 • 105 First Cross Baldy Heifers, 550 lbs @ \$4.90 = \$2,695

#### **Other recent market toppers with Carmichael Genetics:**

10/20/25: Faith Livestock • CARMICHAEL Ranch - BWF STR CALF 546 @ 541.00 = \$2,953.86 / BWF STR CALF 640 @ 454.00 = \$2,905.56;  
BWF HFR CALF 507 lbs. @ 540.00 = \$2,737.80, First cross BWF HFR 596 lbs. @ 497 = \$2902.

10/22/25: Lemmon Livestock • ROTH Ranch, 88 BLK/BWF-STR-CALF, 604 lb.s @ 476.00 = \$2875.04, 40 BWF-HFR-CALF 570 \$520 = \$2,964

1/6/26: Bowman Livestock Auction • GARY & YOLANDA MARTIAN, BUFFALO SD, 85 BLK/BWF-STR, 693 lbs. @ \$425.00 = 2,945.25

3/2/26: Faith Livestock • KENNEDY Ranch, 70 BWF HFR, 807 @ 427.50 = \$3,449.93

6/20/26: St. Onge Livestock • LONG Ranch, 58 BWF STR, 1010 lbs. @ 354.00 = \$3,575.54

### **— Selling in Faith, SD —**

**October 12** 1,500 first cross baldies selling with  
Carmichael genetics.

**October 19** 3,000+ first cross baldies carrying  
Carmichael genetics including 1,500 off  
the Carmichael Ranch, no heifers retained.



*Implementing Carmichael genetics makes dollars and sense!*

## **CARMICHAEL HEREFORDS**

See videos online at  
thelivestocklink.com

or our website  
carmichaelherefords.com

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website or catalog.